

The Parish Visitor

February, 2018



Visit us at myaledoumc.com

WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT?

by Rev. Mark

What do you love? Seriously...what do you love? We love ALL sorts of things. We love our families. We love our pets. We love our homes. We love pizza. We love crisp Fall days. We love music. Tom T. Hall loves little baby ducks, old pickup trucks, slow-movin' trains and rain. He loves little country streams, sleep without dreams, Sunday school in May and hay. (Google it!)

But how can we love all of those things? How can my feelings for pizza be the same as my feelings for my wife? Well...they can't. We just use the same word for both. That's an inadequacy of the English language. Anything that makes us feel good...we love. But in the Greek, there is a multitude of words for love, with 4 main types:

Eros-this is the passionate, romantic love that centers around desire and longing.

Philia-this is the "friendship" kind of love-a virtuous love focusing on loyalty to friends and community.

Storge-this is a natural affection- think "family relationships"

Agapē-this is a more general, all-encompassing affection, when you hold others in high regard. It encourages us to be self-sacrificing and giving to all.

The 1st 3 types of love are based on what the OTHER person does for you and what you receive-the benefits of the relationship. But it is agape alone that exists for the sole benefit of the one receiving the love. 1John 3:16 says, "This is how we know what real love is: Jesus gave His life for us. So we should give our lives for our brothers and sisters."

We have become a nation of strangers, swept up in an epidemic of loneliness. But underneath it all, we all want to be loved. In fact, we are starved for love. We hunger for fellowship. We search for meaning. We long for community. We crave a sense of family. And ultimately, it's all about effort. Love takes effort. What does it require? I would argue that it requires 4 things:

commitment- be willing to do it.

sacrifice- be the one to be willing to give in.

compassion- care for...and about...other people.

action- DO IT!

This month, I challenge you to reach out. It's time to risk. It's time to dare to love. It's time to change your life. Are you ready?

SPECIAL DATES:

- February 1 Caring Hearts Food Prep 9AM
- February 2 Candy Making for Gala 9:30AM
- February 4 Communion & Food Pantry Sunday
- February 5 Candy Making for Gala 9:30AM
- February 9 Valentine Gala 5:30 and 7PM Seatings
- February 10 Emmaus Potluck & Gathering 5:30PM
- February 14 Preschool Screening 8:30AM-3PM
- February 14 Ash Wednesday Service 6:30PM
- February 15 Preschool Screening 1:30-6PM
- February 15 Caring Hearts Food Prep 1PM
- February 15 UMW Exec Meeting 4:15PM
- February 18 Lenten Breakfast 9AM
- February 18 90th Birthday Celebration for Ed Nesbitt 2-4PM
- February 18 Missions Meeting 5:15PM
- February 18 Trustees Meeting 6PM
- February 18 Finance Meeting 6:45PM
- February 18 Administrative Council Meeting 7:30PM
- February 19 Office Closed for President's Day
- February 19 UM Men 6PM
- February 21 Parish Visitor Deadline 8AM
- February 22 Women's Bible Study 5:30PM
- February 22 Craft Fellowship Time 6PM
- February 24 Fur-Ever Friends for Mercer County Fundraiser Meal 1-8PM
- February 25 CIA Luncheon 11:30AM
- February 25 Youth Fellowship 11:30AM
- February 26 Relay for Life Meeting 6:30PM

Current Bible Studies

Four Great Loves

WHAT: Current Tuesday Morning Bible Study

WHEN: Tuesday mornings at 9AM

WHERE: Fellowship Café next to the Sanctuary

WHY: We are called to four great loves: to love God, God's Word, God's people and God's purposes in the world. These eight studies offer you tangible ways to love and serve the God who loves you perfectly and who longs for you to know him more intimately.

WHAT ELSE: The books are \$8 and it is not too late to join!

Ten Men of the Bible: How God Used Imperfect People to Change the World

WHAT: Current Wednesday morning MEN'S Bible Study

WHEN: Wednesdays @ 6:30AM (Coffee, breakfast pizza AND donuts EVERY week!)

WHERE: In the Fellowship Cafe' next to the sanctuary

WHY: The men of the Bible aren't depicted there because they were perfect, but to highlight their faithfulness to God! In this 10-session study guide, Max Lucado looks at the stories of some of these Scriptural characters, pointing out key decisions they made - and the good or bad consequences that resulted. Each session includes discussion questions.

WHAT ELSE: The books are \$15 and it is NEVER too late to join!



Daniel: Standing Strong in a Hostile World

WHAT: Current Wednesday Night Bible Study

WHEN: Wednesday night at 6PM

WHERE: Fellowship Café, next to the Sanctuary

WHY: Living in a culture that was hostile toward having faith in God, Daniel and his friends could have conformed to society. Instead, they learned to take a stand through God's power for what they believed. By studying their integrity and faithfulness, students will be challenged to evaluate their priorities and embrace biblical values, no matter the cost.

WHAT ELSE: The books are \$9.00 and it is not too late to join!

SPECIAL OBSERVANCES IN FEBRUARY

February is American Heart Month, Black History Month, Cherry Month, Embroidery Month, Grapefruit Month and Responsible Pet Owners' Month. Some special days include: 1st- Freedom Day, 2nd- Groundhog's Day, 3rd- The Day the Music Died, 4th- Create a Vacuum Day, 5th- Western Monarch Butterfly Day, 6th- Lame Duck Day, 7th- Olive Oil Day, 8th- Clean Out Your Computer Day, 9th- Toothache Day, 10th- Umbrella Day, 11th- Don't Cry Over Spilled Milk Day, 12th- Plum Pudding Day, 13th- Get a Different Name Day, 14th- Valentine's Day, 15th- Gumdrop Day, 16th- Mashed Potato Day, 17th- Random Acts of Kindness Day, 18th- Battery Day, 19th- Chocolate Mint Day, 20th- Hoodie-Hoo Day, 21st- Love your Pet Day, 22nd- Be Humble Day, 23rd- Dog Biscuit Appreciation Day, 24th- Tennis Day, 25th- Quiet Day, 26th- Carnival Day, 27th- No-Brainer Day, and 28th- Public Sleeping Day. Celebrate the best, the worst, the sweetest and the oddest in February!

WEDNESDAY NIGHT FELLOWSHIP!

Wednesday Night Fellowship is going full speed! The dinners have been spectacular, the rest of the evening has been great and the fellowship has been outstanding! The evening begins with dinner from 5:15-6PM. Then, everything else starts!! At 6PM, your choices include:

Nursery for birth-3 years old
FUEL for kids through 6th Grade
Junior/Senior High Bible Study
Paul Hevland's Adult Bible Study class (see accompanying article)
Bell Choir
Choir

See you on Wednesday evenings!

Current/New Sermon Series

by Rev. Mark

A new day, a new year, a new opportunity to start fresh. But "resolutions" don't last and "plans" can be hollow. February sees us wrap up a TRUE "new day" as we finish our walk through A Fresh Start. Over 4 weeks, we have looked at 4 Bible characters- 2 Old Testament and 2 New Testament- who got a chance to start over again. They got a new lease on life- thanks to the transformative power of God, Who offers that same power to us! The last week of the series looks like this:

Sunday, February 4, 2018 Onesimus (Philemon 1:8-19)

Freedom is nothing but a chance to be better.

(Jeremiah 34:8-9, Matthew 6:42a)

Then, on Sunday, February 11, we will look at a classic Christian story called **The Three Trees**. The fable focuses on three trees that all aspire to be something great. They are all initially disappointed with how the "lives" turn out. It's only later that they each, in their own way, come to realize how special their eventual calling actually was.

Finally, On Ash Wednesday, February 14, we begin a true journey- "traveling from one geographical location to another, as we walk through the story leading up to Easter from a new perspective. This series, called Oh, the Places You'll Go and based...on the Dr. Suess book of the same name!...will look at the geography of the Easter narrative and how it impacts the overall story. The weeks of the series look like this:

Wednesday, February 14, 2018- The Wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11)

Repent...and be saved.

(Ezekiel 9:4b, John 14:6)

Sunday, February 18, 2018- Cana (John 2:1-11)

Life-changing things can happen in the most unlikely of places.

(Psalm 77:13-15, John 4:48)

Sunday, February 25, 2018- The Temple (John 2:13-17)

A little "Spring Cleaning" is always in order.

(Psalm 51:7, 1John 3:2-3)

Sunday, March 4, 2018- Sychar (John 4:4-26)

Living Water that truly refreshes...and quenches.

(Proverbs 3:7-8, 1John 1:8-9)

Sunday, March 11, 2018- Gerasa (Mark 5:1-17)

The world conspires against us, but Jesus saves.

(Deuteronomy 32:17, James 4:7-10)

Sunday, March 18, 2018- Nain (Luke 7:11-17)

New life in a backwater town reminds us that Jesus' touch is for everyone.

(Ezekiel 11:19, 2Corinthians 5:17-18)

Sunday, March 25, 2018- Jerusalem (Luke 19:28-40)

Celebrate good times- come on!

(Zechariah 9:9, 1John 5:1-4)

Thursday, March 29, 2018- Gethsemane (Maundy Thursday) (Matthew 26:36-46)

Not MY will...but Yours.

(Proverbs 3:5-6, Romans 12:2)

Sunday, April 1, 2018- The Tomb (Easter) (John 20:1-10)

The grave could NOT contain Him!

(Isaiah 26:19, John 11:25-26)



JOIN US AT THE VALENTINE GALA

Funding Our Faith with Love – Support the Capitol Campaign

Friday, February 9, 2018

Enjoy a Gourmet Candlelight Dinner with Live Music

Menu Served Restaurant Style

Appetizers

Mixed Greens Salad

Choice of Grilled Pork Medallion or Chicken Cordon Bleu

Baked Potato, Green Beans Almondine, Dinner Rolls

Cheesecake

\$25.00 per person donation

Reservations Required for 5:30 PM or 7:00 PM Dinner by February 5th

Contact Ruth Dulaney 309-738-6151 (Flowers may be ordered with reservation)

Fellowship/Social Time starting at 5:00 PM & 6:30 PM

Fun Photo Booth by donation

Large variety of Homemade Candy can be selected & purchased by the box

Childcare is available by donation

Please sign up for food donations on poster in Fellowship Room.

Candy making on February 2nd and February 5th

at 9:30 in church kitchen or make your own candy at home to donate.

CONFIRMATION CLASS

By Melissa Coleman

On January 28th, we began confirmation classes, but it is not too late to join us! During this time, we will meet 7 Sunday afternoons at 1PM, starting January 28th and ending March 11th. This experience allows all of us to learn more about what it truly means to be a Christian. I always look forward to lots of conversation and reflection, but there are also music videos, fun "game shows," and NEW material! Then on March 18th, they will be baptized (if they have not been), confirmed, and become full members of the church! Please keep our confirmands in prayer, and let Melissa know right away if you want to join us!



Call-Em-All

Did you know that your church has a notification service named Call-Em-All? We use it to notify church members, both through automated phone calls and/or text messages, of a variety of things. Do YOU get texts and/or phone calls from Call-Em-All? If not, would you LIKE to? Whether you are a committee member, a member of a group like United Methodist Men or Women or you would like to receive all-church news or prayer requests, Call-Em-All can help keep you informed. If you are not currently receiving Call-Em-All notifications or would like to receive more of them, simply call the office. We can help!

C.I.A. (Caring Individual Adults) Luncheon February 25th

CIA continues to flourish! This group is aimed folks who often find themselves eating alone. This includes (but is NOT limited to) anyone who has lost their spouse, divorced or separated, or whose loved one is in the nursing home. The CIA luncheon happens once each month. This month, the luncheon will be on Sunday, February 25th, immediately following the 10:30AM worship service. You don't have to bring anything except yourself. Feel free to invite a friend to share the meal and fellowship. We look forward to seeing you on the 25th of February at 11:45AM!

WHAT DO GROWING CHURCHES DO?

by Rev. Mark

I will admit it right up front- I am a geek. I geek out about ALL sorts of things. But one of the things I geek out about is church growth. I am passionate about it. AND...I read a lot about it. And I read an article on church growth I want to share with you. Written by Brian K. Dodd, the article focuses on what growing churches do. Dodd has a list-

1. Growing churches focus on church health more than church growth.
2. Growing churches demand excellence.
3. Growing churches are vigilant about their mission, vision and core values.
4. Growing churches are willing to stop unproductive ministries.
5. Growing churches not only embrace but also foster change.
6. Growing churches celebrate.

For my money, that is a fascinating and powerful list. Notice #1- if you want your church to grow, don't focus on growth! Focus on health! That makes good sense to me. And I see us doing that in so many ways. We are not about excluding people. We are not about different "factions" jockeying for position and power. We ARE about welcoming everyone and recognizing that we are all radically equal in the eyes of God.

Then there's #2. Again, I feel we are working really hard on that one. It's important that we refuse to settle for less than excellent- it's what God deserves. No less. We want to always try to make everything we do as good as it can possibly be.

#3 says we have to be vigilant about our mission. Can you name the mission of your church? If you have been coming here more than a few months...I'm nearly positive you can! "We exist to connect people to Jesus Christ". We measure everything we do with that yardstick.

The hardest one of the bunch might be #4. Why? Because that means if we have a ministry that is beloved...but is unproductive and doesn't support our mission...we need to be willing to put that one to bed. It's HARD to shut down ministries. But it's sometimes essential. And I see us more and more willing to evaluate and re-evaluate, measuring which ministries are working and which one are ready to be "put to bed".

#5 probably SEEMS like the hardest...because it has the word "change" in it! (Gasp!) Let's recognize the 400 pound gorilla in the room- change can be hard. But healthy things grow. And when they grow...they change. And if they CAN'T...or WON'T...change, they don't grow. And if they don't grow...they eventually die.

And then there's #6. We like to celebrate, don't we? We celebrate the big things, to be sure. But we also celebrate the small things. (We sing "happy birthday" nearly every Sunday!) We have a lot to celebrate and we should be ready and willing to regularly do just that!

At the end of the article, Dodd says, "While your church may have grown numerically, is Jesus happy with the church that has been built?" That's a VERY good thing to consider. And when I'm honest in regard to that question, I think the answer is "Yes!" I am confident that Jesus is happy with who we are and where we're headed. I also am convinced that He has a LOT more for us to do!



FUEL- OUR WEDNESDAY NIGHT CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

by Rev. Mark

Our Wednesday Night Children's ministry- **FUEL**- is off and running. And the leadership couldn't be more excited! The emphasis is built around "Hands-On Bible". The kids have fun while they learn more about the great stories of the Bible...AND how those stories impact their lives! We are SO excited about the positive impact this ministry has on our children! If you have children or grandchildren, please consider helping them be a part of this exciting new program. If you have friends or neighbors who have kids, please invite them. Let them know that they are welcome to come for dinner at 5:15PM, stay for an adult Bible study while their kids are ministered to from 6PM to 7PM and be home, working on homework and getting everybody ready for bed, by 7:15PM!



Thank you so much for the delicious gift basket I received at Christmas time. I really appreciate you thinking of me!

Wendell Harroun

Thank you to everyone who gave their time at such a busy time of year to provide fruit, cookies, and pumpkin bread to me and others. I enjoyed all of it. Also, thank you to the delivery people. I'm sure it takes many hands to bring joy and happiness to many. Thank you and Happy New Year to all.

Gladys Johnson

Thank you for the wonderful Christmas gift of delicious cookies, pumpkin bread, candies, and fruit. I enjoyed it VERY much!

Thank you for remembering me, and God bless all of you.

Love,

Rita Haizlip

I would like to thank everyone who helped me celebrate my 102nd birthday at Brookstone. I would also like to thank everyone who sent cards and gifts. A special thanks to Brookstone for hosting the open house for me, and for the beautiful flowers, cake, and gifts.

*Ethel "Tommy" Greer
Brookstone Senior Living*

Aledo UMC,

Thank you so much for remembering me at Christmas with the plate of goodies. I enjoyed it!

Bettie Speer

Do you want to take some food to a friend who is ill or in need?

Our Caring Hearts freezer, located in the northeast corner of the church basement back room, has a variety of soups, casseroles, fruit, and desserts.

A group of dedicated ladies prepare the delicious homemade food twice a month for anyone who is in need of cheer.

Please help yourself!

A big thank you to the Methodist Men for moving me. I am so thankful. God is good, all the time. Special thanks to Bill Breeden, Randy McGinnis, Greg Cobert, Stan Swank, Dwight Reynolds, Gary Heard, Larry Dennison, and Tom Balmer.

Kathy Haney

Aledo UMC:

Colleen and I want to THANK YOU so much for the generous gift this Christmas! It is a joy, honor, and privilege serving the Lord at your church! A happy and healthy New Year to you all!

Kent & Colleen Hessman

AUMC:

Thanks for the cash staff bonus. I have enjoyed being Treasurer.

Dwight Reynolds

Thank you all so very much for the Christmas gift! I greatly appreciate it and plan on putting it to good use!

God bless you all!

Ashley Schmidt

Dear Brothers and Sisters at AUMC,

Thank you so much for the generous monetary Christmas gift. I so enjoy working for my Church family!

God is good! All the time!

Debbie Swank

To my Church family with gratitude,
Thank you much more than words can say,
Because you were thoughtful in such a nice way!
Thank you for everything!

Sheryll Kisling

Dear Church Family,

Thank you so much for your outpouring of love and friendship over the loss of Henry (Hank) Allan. We cannot thank you enough for the many kind and generous gestures that you have shown us. We are so thankful to be a part of a church who loves and cares for us during this time. We thank you so much.

Love,

Betty Allan

Joanne & Mark Harris

Janice & Paul Fuchs

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

02/03/2007– Jesse & Connie Midkiff
 02/07/1954– Richard & Beverly Norton
 02/13/2000– Bob & Sandi Fausett
 02/20/1993– Larry & Clara McCreight
 02/26/1977– Bill & Kathy Newswander



UM Women Golden Age Birthdays

02/01– Connie Shaw
 02/14– Molly Paulsgrove
 02/20– Sheila Spencer
 02/21– Dora Mae Howlett
 02/29– JeAnne Balmer



The deadline for the next
Parish Visitor is

Wednesday, February 21st @ 8am.

Please have all articles submitted
by this date!

THOSE WE REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS

Norma Adams
 Hank Allan family
 Jamicynn Allen
 Sandy Anderson/cancer
 Kira Anderson/healing
 George Laverne Bethell
 Bob Bocox
 Brian Boenkamp/coma
 Brady, Jacob, Camden
 Brenda Brandt
 Debby Breeden
 Joalice Bressan
 Calvin
 Tricia & Rory Conway/Lymes
 Charlie David
 Dee Dellitt
 Stacey DeSpain/6yrs/health
 Dick & Beverly
 Madge Douglas
 Curt Downing family
 Dennis Downing
 Jim Droste
 Marcia Duncan
 Lauren Eggen/cancer
 Ruth Engle
 Chris Engstrom
 Ron Engstrom family
 Soni Engstrom
 Evelyn/1yr old/cancer
 Jenifer Franks
 Carol Freeman/cancer
 Connie Freeman

Gail/chemo & radiation
 Bill Glenn
 Joyce Hajostek/healing
 Linda Hall/shoulder surgery
 Susie Hall/breast cancer
 Rev Mark and family
 Michael Harris
 Fannie Harrison
 Pam Heath
 Marilyn Hessman
 Parker Hopkins/2yrs old/cancer
 Don Howlett
 Frazier Hunt family
 Noah Huston
 Judy Inman
 Jackson
 Jeremy
 Darlene Jones/health
 Debbie Jones/heart
 Terry Jones/cancer
 Aubrey King/cancer
 Chad King/brain tumor
 Wayne King
 Kristin
 Allison Kuk
 Jon Lee/cancer
 Tiffanee Lloyd
 Brent McCurdy family
 Lisa McWhorter
 Violet Meskan/Lyme disease
 Cathy Miller/shingles
 Monica

Kayla & Jamie Mugford/unborn child
 Nena
 Jace Nowick/illness
 Andrea Parker
 Ember Pappas
 Bryce Rathje
 Mary Rillie/health
 Nick & Sarah Riordan
 Alyce Robinson family
 Fred Rooth
 Jerry Russell/cancer
 Lisa Rzepecki
 Kris Salmon/cancer
 Ron Schmidt/healing
 Don Schroeder/health
 Ann Sedam/fell
 Kevin Shride
 Jim Stites
 Joe Thibedoux/lymphoma
 Pam & Neil Truman
 Tammy W
 Rebecca Weihler/brain tumor
 Jo Weis
 Evelyn Yerkey/health
 Shut-ins/Nursing Home Residents
 Military & families
 All ill/in hospitals
 All who battle cancer
 Our Church
 All who mourn

Mercer County Schools
 Administration, Teachers, Students
 and Staff
 National and Local Governmental
 Leaders



WINTER SAFETY TIPS (FROM AUMC SAFETY TEAM)

• Wear shoes or boots that provide traction. Avoid shoes with smooth soles and high heels. • Assume that all wet, dark areas on pavements and sidewalks are slippery and icy. • If you must carry a load, try not to carry too much; leave your hands and arms free to balance yourself. • When walking on steps always use the hand railings and plant your feet firmly on each step. • Use special care when entering and exiting vehicles; use the vehicle for support. • Watch where you are stepping and GO S-L-O-W-L-Y taking short steps or shuffle for stability.

Ways to Stop the Spread of Cold and Flu

Avoid Contact: If you are sick, stay home. A person is contagious a full day before symptoms show up and up to 7 days after becoming ill. The CDC recommends that a person who catches the flu or a flu-like infection stays home for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone.

Wash your Hands: The flu is spread through droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or even talks. Washing your hands frequently helps prevent the spread of cold and flu viruses. If hand-washing isn't an option, use hand-sanitizer as a back-up. It is best to try and keep your hands away from your face.

Cover your Mouth: If you have to cough or sneeze, be sure to cover your nose or mouth with a tissue. Immediately wash your hands with warm water and soap.

Keep Surfaces Clean: It is good practice to clean and disinfect shared surfaces, such as doorknobs, phones, and keyboards often to prevent the spread of infection.



CANDLE...WHAT?

On February 2nd, we recognize a little-noticed day in the church calendar- Candlemas. Described in the Gospel of Luke (2:22-40), it's the day Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem forty days after his birth to both complete Mary's required post-childbirth purification and perform the redemption of the firstborn.

When they arrived at the temple, they met Simeon, who had been promised by God that "he should not see death before he had seen the Messiah of the Lord." He took Jesus in his arms and prayed the prayer that would become known as the Canticle of Simeon, which prophesied the redemption of the world by Jesus. This was baby Jesus' introduction to God's house, as well as the church's 1st "formal" meeting with the Messiah.

God chose to come down in the form of a newborn- that fact never ceases to amaze! Churches often talk about "Christmas and Easter People" (those who only come to church on special holidays), but we ARE Christmas and Easter people. We worship a God who chose to do the miraculous- a birth in a manger and a death on a cross- FOR us, so that we might be redeemed. We should keep the miracle of those seasons in our hearts all year long.

Wednesday Night Fellowship February Meals

Come join us for delicious, free meals on the
following Wednesdays at 5:15 PM.



- February 7th Chili or Chicken Noodle Soup – Tom King
- February 14th *Fat Tuesday Pancakes – Rev. Mark*
- February 21st Baked Spaghetti, Lettuce Salad, Garlic Bread, Fruit – *Workers Needed*
- February 28th Pork/Dressing, Scalloped Potatoes, Veggies, Applesauce, Ice Cream – Randy and Laura McGinnis

Donations are accepted for our Brazil Food Pantry mission.

Enjoy the food and fellowship!

LENTEN INVITATION

By Rev. Mark

The season leading up to Easter- a time for reflection, preparation, sacrifice...Lent. Its beginning is signaled by, of all things, Shrove Tuesday (we know it better as Fat Tuesday or Mardi Gras and it is February 13th this year.) and is immediately followed by Ash Wednesday (February 14th this year). We receive the ashes of Ash Wednesday on our foreheads, representing our need and desire for repentance. And then we begin a long and challenging journey that will lead us all the way to Easter Sunday.

Easter is, without a doubt, one of the best, easiest, least threatening days of the entire year to invite someone to church. Do you like what's happening at your church? Are you being fed spiritually here? If so, share that fact with someone! Chose a relative, neighbor, co-worker...whoever...and tell them what God is doing in your life. Then...invite them to come with you to church on Easter and see what it's all about!

FAT TUESDAY DINNER/ ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

On **Wednesday, February 14th at 5:15 PM**, we will have a special Wednesday Night Fellowship dinner of pancakes to commemorate Fat Tuesday (technically the day before!)- the day to empty your pantry of fatty food in anticipation of Ash Wednesday and the season of Lent. (see accompanying article) **It will be followed at 6:30PM** by a special Ash Wednesday worship service to commemorate the beginning of Lent. We will look at the reason for the season and more specifically the significance of the ashes. Communion will be served.

CHURCH WEBSITE

Have you looked at your church's website? If not, go to www.myaledoumc.com and see what's going on! Not only can you see the "basics" about the Aledo United Methodist Church, you can find the most church current calendar. Also, the monthly newsletter can be found on our website. Stop by and check it out!

Youth & Children's Page



2/3rds of God
Feb 17th
10am-1pm

youth
FELLOWSHIP

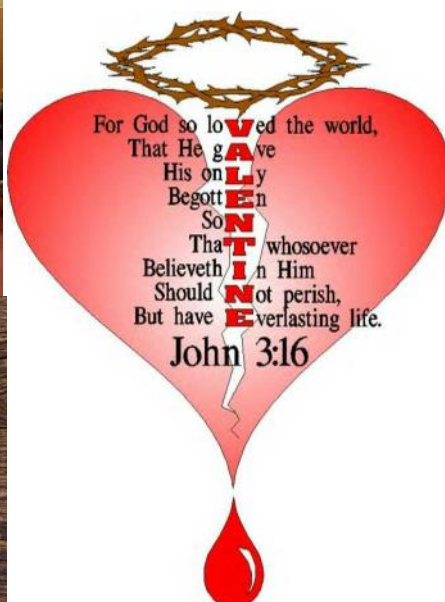
FEBRUARY 25TH
11:30AM-12:30PM

Renovate 2018!

Renovate is all about the heart –

allowing Christ to change us from the inside out. This is a weekend discipleship retreat open to students in 6th through 12th grades, hosted at Christ Church in East Moline, for the purpose of renewing faith, opening our lives, and living out faith. It will be February 9-10th, 2018...See Melissa for more information and permission slips! This retreat is always a life changing experience.

Please, don't miss out!



TAG FUN FACT

Did you know the name T.A.G. (Teens Among God) was established after a brainstorming session with Ally Engle and Quinci Shride in 2012.

What's Coming Up,

TAG:

ATTN, 6-8th
graders, Join us on
every Tuesday,
5-6:15pm

Senior High
(9-12th), come learn
and fellowship with
us every Sunday, 6:00
-7:15pm

Youth Bible Study—
Wednesdays, 6-7pm

MARCH RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

Our Aledo UMC is sponsoring the March Red Cross Blood Drive on Tuesday, March 20th. The drive is at the Aledo VFW, and is from noon to 6PM.

The need for blood is great, but especially during the winter months. What a life-saving gift we can give with just a donation of about an hour and a half of our time.

I am putting this plea out to all of you past donors, and to all who have considered giving blood but never quite got around to it. The Red Cross and all it's recipients need you.

In addition to givers, I will also need volunteers to donate sandwiches and to work at the "canteen" on that day. Please contact me if you would be willing to help in any way.

Thanks in advance for marking this important date on your calendar.

Mary Flint

THE NURSERY

Have you ever wondered why churches need good, safe, well-staffed nursery programs? Well, wonder no more! The reason churches need strong nursery programs is that, for folks with young children, the nursery is often THE most important part of the church. If there is a good nursery, they can comfortably leave their kids in capable hands and attend a worship service. If, however, they find a nursery that is poorly or under-staffed with folks who seem unfriendly and stressed, they A. won't leave their kids, and B. won't come back! Your church truly believes that children are NOT simply the future of the church- they are very much an active, important part of its present!

SAVE THE DATE!

APRIL 7TH IS

"THE JOURNEY"

DON'T MISS IT!

MAKE IT ON

**YOUR CALENDAR
TODAY!**

COOKING FOR WEDNESDAY NIGHT FELLOWSHIP

We all LOVE to eat! But maybe you also love to cook! We could use your help. Ruth Dulaney is scheduling groups to provide Wednesday Night meals for the "Spring semester". We need individuals, groups, or families to sign up for those 2017 WNFs. There IS a budget, so if covering the cost of the food is a problem...don't let it be! It is a true joy to be able to provide dinner for others. The sign-up board has empty spots just waiting for YOU to be the hands and feet of Jesus!

CONNECTION COINS FOR FEBRUARY

The Connection Coins (or as Rev. Mark calls them, the "thinly-veiled Pringles cans"!) are doing great things in the life of the Aledo UMC! On the 2nd Sunday of each month, during the Children's Moment, the ushers pass around those cans. You are encouraged to drop your change in- although we WILL accept "folding money"! And that change goes toward helping fund a ministry within the church.

This month (February 11th), the Connection Coin offering will go toward another important ministry. Our youth programs continue to grow and flourish. And there are times when the cost of a youth event or conference is such that one of the kids simply can't afford to go. So 100% of the money that is collected in the cans on February 11th will be used to help fund scholarships to enable more youth to be able to more fully participate. What a GREAT way to help connect people to Jesus Christ. So bring your change on February 11th!

**PRAYER WALK
THROUGH THE
CHURCH
EVERY
SUNDAY MORNING
AT 7AM.**

Need a ride to church?

Contact Greg Cobert at 309-737-5621, or the office at 309-582-2169 to make arrangements to be picked up.



**WORSHIP TIMES:
Sundays 8AM,
9:15AM, 10:30AM
Sunday School
9:15AM**

VALENTINE'S DAY

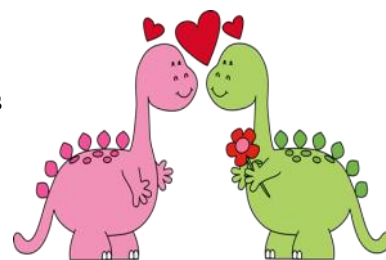
Love is an amazing thing. It breaks all the rules. It has a mind of its own. And it cannot be stopped. Think about it - there are people you love, and you can't even begin to explain why...you just do. Likewise, there are people who love you, and sometimes you can't imagine for the life of you why they do. Another truth about love is that it is so much more than simply an emotion. Love is a conscious choice that takes dedication, perseverance, and some good, old-fashioned hard work.

We all know that February 14th is Valentine's Day- the day we send cards, flowers, and candy to loved ones. (Hallmark and Hershey's have made several fortunes based on that fact.) This Valentine's Day, I hope you do that again (if it is your habit). But along with the conventions, I have a challenge for you...2 challenges, to be exact.

Your first challenge is to make a list of the people you love the most. Write down the 5 things you love the most about them. And then...TELL THEM! Share with them what you love about them. Leave out ANY negatives (we all have them), and focus on the positive aspects of the person. It will make them feel so good, and, surprise, surprise, it will make you feel good, too!

Your second challenge is to spend a total of 15 minutes every day this month in prayer, letting God know how much you love Him.

You may be saying, "15 minutes?!" I said total. Split it up- 5 minutes at a time. You may be saying, "EVERY day for a MONTH?!" Remember, February is the shortest month of the year! You may be saying, "How much I love God?! Yes, we are called to love God, above all else. God loves us SO much that He sent His only Son to live among us, teach us, die for our sins, and rise for our eternal lives. When you look at it that way, how could we NOT love God? Make sure you tell those around you they are loved. Also, make sure you tell God how much you love Him.



FINANCIAL MATTERS (WEEKLY NEED \$6,689)

197Date	01/07/2018	01/14/2018	01/21/2018	01/28/2018
Attendance	224	197	230	244
Receipts				
(Toward Budget)	\$7,329.00	\$3,555.51	\$5,006.00	\$6,317.00

SHARING
GOD'S
GIFTS